As provided in the Central Road Fund Act, allocations are made Statewise. The allocation criteria gives weightage to need (measure of lack of connectivity) as well as Coverage (measure of length of existing network). The share of Madhya Pradesh has been fixed at Rs. 315 crores accordingly. However, States with high levels of lack of connectivity are also being assisted through funds obtained from World Bank/Asian Development Bank (ADB). ADB has approved a $ 400 million (Rs. 2000 crores) project for Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

Jobs to educated unemployed youth

1399. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the achievements made so far for providing job opportunities to the educated unemployed youths in the backward districts of the country; and

(b) the details of the number of the educated unemployed youths in these backward districts of the country have been benefited by getting employment during 2003-04 and 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Rural Development implements, through the State Governments a Self Employment Scheme and a Wage Employment Scheme namely, the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) and Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY). The eligible educated unemployed youths in backward districts can avail of the assistance under Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). During 2003-04 and 2004-05 (upto Oct. 2004), 8.96 lakh and 3.9 lakh total Swarojgaris have been assisted including educated unemployed rural youth in the country respectively under Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY).

Improving traditional skills of village artisans

1400.SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is thinking of improving the traditional skills of

village artisans like carpenters, black-smiths, tailors, herbal-collectors, etc. and innovate marketing opportunities of the goods produced by them so that their time and skills could be fully utilized and they become economically viable;

(b) if so, whether any blue-print or scheme has been drawn or form ulated in consultation with local bodies like panchayats, Zilla parishads, etc;

(c) whether financial at the local level through co-operative or scheduled banks would also be made available to them on easy terms; and

(d) if so, what are the details of such schemes?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Skill up-gradation, both technical as well as managerial, of rural poor including rural artisans to enable them to take up economic activities for sustainable income is an integral component of the existing Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) being implemented as per approved guidelines. Marketing support involving market intelligence, development of markets, consultancy services and institutional support for marketing of the goods are also provided under the scheme.

(c) to (d) SGSY is a credit - cum - subsidy programme wherein credit from banks is a critical component and subsidy is a minor and enabling component. It has been conceived as a holistic programme covering all aspects of self-employment of the rural poor *viz.*, organization of poor into Selt Help Groups and their capacity building, training, selection of key activities, planning of activity clusters, infrastructure build up, technology and marketing support.

Villages to be connected under PMGSY

1401.SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages having population of more than one thousand which are likely to be connected with the main roads under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in Kerala State; and

(b) the funds allocated for the purpose in the current?